



CITY OF ABSECON
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**MARCH 24, 2009
BUDGET MEETING
MINUTES**

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL: Marczyk, Norris, Falivene, Vizthum, Gorman, Caterson

Absent: Green

Also Present: Mayor Elco; City Administrator, Terry Dolan; CFO, Jessica Thompson & Carie Crone, City Clerk

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON THE SUNSHINE LAW – Lynn

NOTIFICATION THAT THIS MEETING IS ELECTRONICALLY RECORDED – Lynn

POLICE DEPT.

Jessica – compared overtime fees with other towns because she is concerned that we have high fees already with that. She's been keeping a tab over the years and this year was the highest in a few years. So far this year we are very high; it's a big part of the budget. It's hurting the budget and she doesn't see it coming down.

Mayor – will contact the chief and see what is going on. Some people have been out due to injuries and some changes have been made already. He will be having a meeting with Jerry and the chief also to delve deeper into this and get a tighter grip on it.

Jerry – we are prepared to move quickly on this and get some ideas out there and some boundaries.

Joe – this was discussed at the finance meeting and if it stays on this pace, we're looking at a quarter of a million dollars.

Jim – at court last night there were 3 officers in attendance.

Jerry – they could be there for testimony and while there, they could be working too. There is one officer designated as the court liaison who specifically works that night and the others are supposed to rotate shifts.

Joe – asked Jerry about the idea of the class 2 officers.

Jerry – it would be a year round position but on a part-time basis at a much reduced rate, possibly around \$15.00/hr and they could do the concerts, football games, etc. They might be able to carry a gun according to their level.

Jim – knows of guys who have these qualifications already and they do dispatch too.

Lynn – we don't just want to add these people without reducing our overtime. It would have to be done after looking at the overtime and if this would reduce it drastically. If not, then we can't hire.

Jim – suggested Council do letters thanking the department heads.

Discussion on deferring pension payments was held.

Lynn - We can pay the whole thing or pay half of it.

Jessica – in order to pay half of it an application has to be done to the local finance board and some other things. You can only do it for one year and then you pay it back over 15 years but we don't know the actuary amount is – it would be more.

Terry – explained why he does not recommend doing it. You would be paying more by the time it is paid off and he doesn't think you should use taxpayer's money to do it. There is \$2.8 million dollars in the deferred school payments and that fund has been steady for years. Next year will be as difficult as this year for budgets, the departments will have to know that purchase orders will come out of the finance dept. very slowly and they will be told no a lot more. Hopefully we can realize some savings this year. Let's hope this is the worst budgetary year we have for the rest of our lives. If that is so, this is the year to cut to the bone. Then next year might be a little easier by using some of the 2008 leftover fund balance money.

Terry – a resolution will have to be passed by council to use this fund and it will probably say School Taxes Payable in it.

Jessica – there will be other ones needed for the budget too so I don't think it will matter.

Joe – it is explainable. He wants a clarification from Mr. Leon before we decide.

Mayor – believes this is the best choice.

Lynn – believes we have a consensus that this would be our best answer. Well it looks like we can introduce it the first meeting in April at 2.9%.

Terry – wanted everyone to know that the budget less grants line of our budget is basically the operating budget of the city including police overtime, salaries, utilities, etc. We are looking at cutting that by 3%. There are a couple of capital budget items that are in that budget now: a new heater is needed out front the Mayor's office for about \$10,000; a new well at the Crestview Ave. soccer field for \$23,500, but that will lessen our water bills. With the New Jersey Ave. reconstruction project, we have talked about putting irrigation sleeves into that project so we can irrigate those islands some time down the road. We have nothing in the budget for that and he has seen estimates between \$10,000 and \$50,000 and the other is ASAC wanting to put on a second story on the clubhouse in the wagon wheel. They've been talking about this for years and now they are talking about it again. What do you think about using some of the capital fund balance for those two projects? The clubhouse roof is about \$25,000, but he doesn't think so and the sleeves on NJ Ave. he is not sure of the cost. These would not affect this budget process.

Jess – thinks you need to do an ordinance to fund those projects.

Joe – wants Terry to communicate with ASAC that we might be putting a new roof on and then they decide to do a second floor.

Mayor – Terry should be in touch with the head of ASAC and put everything in writing. Is this a volunteer job?

Terry – I don't think so. I think they will need a contractor to do some of it, us to buy some materials for them. Feels we could do that by getting a purchase order from a lumber company and they buy it.

Jerry – I was asked if I would give them a price for an exterior staircase but I told them I would do it for them.

Joe – explained what has happened over the past couple years and feels they should put some money in from the fund they have. The building does need repairs.

Mayor – as to the sleeves on NJ Ave., they are important. We are ready to go and the County is ready to move and we are just waiting for them to be installed.

Terry – explained where the money would come from and where the other monies would come for to do the last projects, which would be the capital fund balance. Did some investigative work on NJ Avenue and checked the drainage problem at the intersection NJ Ave. and Highland Blvd. We think we know the reason of it and have a partial solution to it and it is translated into revised plans that are on Eddie Dennis' desk and told him to do everything he could to get them to the County by the end of this week.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn meeting – Councilman Norris – second – Councilman Falivene
All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Carie A. Crone, Clerk

Approved: _____